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January 21, 2004

Honorable Francis C. Heitmeier, Chairman
Honorable John A. Alario, Jr., Vice Chairman
Joint Legislative Committee on the Budget
P. O. Box 44294
Baton Rouge, LA 70804

Re: Exceptional Performance and Efficiency Incentive Program
Proposal by the Department of Health and Hospitals,
Office of the Secretary, Bureau of Protective
Services/Adult Protective Services Program

Dear Senator Heitmeier and Representative Alario:

In accordance with Louisiana Revised Statute (R.S.) 39:87.5(D)(8), we have completed our analysis of the material and substantive accuracy of the proposal submitted by the Department of Health and Hospitals (DHH), Office of the Secretary, Bureau of Protective Services/Adult Protective Services (APS) program for a financial reward based on the Exceptional Performance and Efficiency Incentive Program. State law and program rules require our findings to be submitted to the Performance Review Subcommittee no later than January 31. However, since the subcommittee members have not been appointed, our report is being submitted to you to be distributed to subcommittee members once they are appointed.

The DHH-Bureau of Protective Services bases its proposal on exceptional performance of APS program staff in completing investigations of abuse, neglect, exploitation or extortion of disabled adults, despite an increasingly demanding workload. Specifically, APS program staff decreased the time frame to complete these investigations from 30 days in fiscal year 2001 to 20 days in 2003, despite a 24.6% increase in caseload size and a 158% increase in caseload complexity. In addition, the percentage of investigations completed within policy timelines increased from 61% to 81% over the same period.

We did not verify all items in the proposal. We only verified the data that the department supplied that supported its claims related to exceptional performance. We also reviewed documents that support the amount of its reward request.

In summary, we found the following:

- **DHH is seeking a reward for nonrecurring expenditures in the amount of \$32,840.09.** The reward will be used to purchase 17 new laptops for APS program staff.

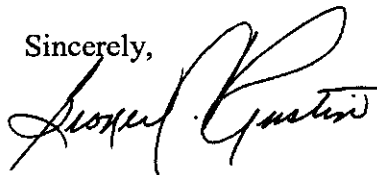
Honorable Francis C. Heitmeier, Chairman
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The proposal is materially accurate except for the following items:

- **The increase in caseload is overstated by 17.4% (page 7 of the proposal).** The proposal states that the APS caseload has increased 24.6% from fiscal year 2001 to fiscal year 2003. DHH uses the number of cases assigned to investigators as its method for measuring caseload. According to the documentation provided by the agency and the performance indicator information presented on page 4 of the proposal, the number of cases assigned to investigators during fiscal year 2001 and 2003 was 1171 and 1255, respectively. As a result, the APS caseload has increased by only 7.2% over the past three fiscal years.
- **The increase in caseload complexity is understated by 13% (page 7 of the proposal).** The proposal states that the complexity of the APS caseload has increased by 158% from fiscal year 2001 to fiscal year 2003. DHH uses the number of cases requiring legal intervention as its method for measuring caseload complexity. According to documentation provided by the agency, the number of cases requiring legal intervention during fiscal years 2001 and 2003 was 102 and 276 (not 264 as stated in the proposal), respectively. As a result, the complexity of the APS caseload has increased by 171% over the past three fiscal years.

I hope this information is useful in your legislative decision-making. A copy of this information has been provided to DHH.

Sincerely,



Grover C. Austin, CPA
First Assistant Legislative Auditor

GCA/ss

Attachment

[DHHAPS04]

Attachment

REWARD PROPOSAL BASED ON EXCEPTIONAL PERFORMANCE

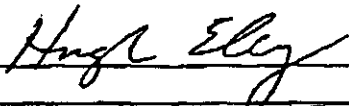
DEPARTMENT: Health & Hospitals SCHEDULE: 09-307
AGENCY: Office of the Secretary PROGRAM: Management & Finance
ACTIVITY: Bureau of Protective Services/Adult Protective Services
SUBJECT FISCAL YEAR: 2002-2003

This proposal is for a reward based on exceptional performance.

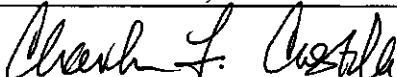
This original document, plus seven copies, must be received by the Performance Review Subcommittee of the Joint Legislative Committee on the Budget by 5:00 p.m. on November 15th. The Subcommittee's physical address is 900 N. 3rd St., State Capitol, 11th Floor, Baton Rouge, LA 70802; the mailing address is P.O. Box 94486, Baton Rouge, LA 70804; the e-mail address is "reade@legis.state.la.us".

The proposal is based on exceptional performance by the Bureau of Protective Services, an activity within the Management & Finance Program in the Office of the Secretary. The Bureau has consistently improved its performance in completing investigations of abuse. It has reduced the time taken to complete investigations from an average of 30 days in FY 2000-01 to 20 days in the subject fiscal year. The percentage of investigations completed within policy timelines has increased from 61% to 81% over the same period. The requested reward of \$32840.09 is proposed to be used to purchase laptop computers to enable the investigative staff to more quickly and accurately document casework and to facilitate continued performance at this level as caseloads continue to increase.

Application prepared by: Hugh Eley, Bureau Director Date: 11/06/03

Signature 

Agency head approval: Charles Castille, Undersecretary Date: 11/06/03

Signature 

Received by the Performance Review Subcommittee: Date:

Sent to the Legislative Auditor Date:

Response from Legislative Auditor: Date:

REWARD PROPOSAL BASED ON EXCEPTIONAL PERFORMANCE

Disposition by Subcommittee:

Date:

Part One: Explanation of the Activity and the Exceptional Performance

Describe the activity (the "subject activity"), program and performance data upon which your proposal is based. The subject activity may be a subset or component of a program (or equivalent), or involve the efforts of one or more programs or the entire agency. Be specific in identifying the organizational unit or area where the exceptional performance was achieved. Section A. is used to give a narrative description, and Section B. is used to provide the specific performance data.

- A. Provide a detailed narrative description of the subject activity or program(s) and summarize the exceptional performance achieved by that entity.**

REWARD PROPOSAL BASED ON EXCEPTIONAL PERFORMANCE

This proposal concerns the Adult Protective Services (APS) program operated by the Dept. of Health and Hospitals, Office of the Secretary, Office of Management & Finance, Bureau of Protective Services. The activities of the APS program comprise Goal 1, Objective 4 of the DHH Strategic Plan. That objective is: "Through the Bureau of Protective Services, to complete investigations of assigned reports of abuse, neglect, exploitation or extortion of disabled adults aged 18 through 59 in accordance with policy and make appropriate referrals for intervention to remedy substantiated cases, and follow-up to ensure cases are stabilized".

This activity is mandated by LA R.S. 14:403.2, the Adult Protective Services Law, which designates DHH as the protective services agency for adults aged 18 through 59 or emancipated minors who are mentally, physically, or developmentally disabled and whose disability substantially impairs their ability to care for or protect themselves. The Bureau was established and assigned this responsibility in 1993, with the first cases being accepted in December, 1993. The APS program responds primarily to reports of abuse regarding adults with disabilities who live in non-licensed settings in the community, such as their own homes, with family members, etc. The program also responds to cases where the victim resides in a licensed facility but is allegedly abused by someone other than facility staff. For example, a resident of a group home may report being abused by family while on a home visit. Reports of abuse occurring in licensed facilities and/or where the alleged perpetrator is a staff person of a licensed provider are handled by the appropriate licensing and regulatory agency. Other duties of the Bureau include training, policy development, and investigation of abuse/neglect allegations in DHH-operated facilities. The Bureau is in the process of taking over investigations involving Medicaid Waiver providers.

The APS program is charged under LA R.S. 14:403.2 with four basic functions. These are: 1) investigate and assess reports to determine if the situation warrants further action; 2) develop a social services plan utilizing community resources aimed at remedying any abuse; 3) case management until the situation is stabilized; and 4) referral for legal assistance to initiate any necessary remedial action. These functions are performed by APS Specialists housed in DHH Regional Administrative Offices around the state. APS currently has a total of seventeen (17) such Specialists statewide. Total State office personnel include the APS Program Manager, two Program Coordinators, and a Quality Assurance Specialist. The regional staff were formerly under the supervision of DHH Regional Administrators, who managed multiple functions of the Office of the Secretary on a regional basis, (i.e., Legal, Human Resources, APS, etc.). (continued on Attachment A).

REWARD PROPOSAL BASED ON EXCEPTIONAL PERFORMANCE

- B. Provide detailed performance data evidencing the exceptional performance represented in your proposal. Be sure to note those specific performance indicators and standards which are particularly important. Provide any separate or narrative background information necessary to highlight or support the exceptional nature of the performance. All proposers must complete Format 1. Format 2 is to be used to report additional data which is not captured in LaPAS.**

Using Format 1, list all objectives and performance indicators for the subject year and at least the immediately preceding year (three years of data is best) for the program (or equivalent) in which the subject activity occurred. Provide the performance standards from the enacted budget/LaPAS. For proposals based on activities which occur at the sub-program (or equivalent) level which are not directly reflected in the agency's LaPAS performance data, the data for the program (or equivalent) comprising such activity is *required*. In cases where multiple programs are involved, provide the performance data for the entire agency.

Format 1. Provide the LaPAS data using this format, attaching addenda as necessary.

| | | | | | | | |
|---|--|--|---------------|---------------------|---------------|---------------------|---------------|
| Program (or agency): | | DHH/OS, Management & Finance, Bureau of Protective Services | | | | | |
| Objective: | Goal 1, Objective 4: Through the Bureau of Protective Services, to complete investigations of assigned reports of abuse, neglect, exploitation or extortion of disabled adults aged 18 through 59 in accordance with policy and make appropriate referrals for intervention to remedy substantiated cases, and follow-up to ensure cases are stabilized. | | | | | | |
| | | FY 2000-2001 | | FY 2001-2002 | | FY 2002-2003 | |
| Performance Indicators | | Standard | Actual | Standard | Actual | Standard | Actual |
| Number of investigations completed | | 800 | 1,104* | 800 | 1,058* | 1,000 | 1,103 |
| Percentage of investigations completed within established timeframes | | 50 | 60.59* | 60 | 73.8* | 70 | 81* |
| Average number of days to complete investigations | | 50 | 29.7* | 50 | 21.6* | 30 | 19.6* |
| Number of clients served | | 875 | 1,007 | 875 | 920* | 950 | 1,076 |
| Number of cases assigned to investigators (GPI) | | N/A | 1,171* | N/A | 1,081 | N/A | 1,255 |
| | | | | | | | |

* This number is the revised prior year actual that was entered into LaPAS during the second quarter of the following fiscal year.

REWARD PROPOSAL BASED ON EXCEPTIONAL PERFORMANCE

Use "Format 2" for instances where the agency's performance data in the enacted budget and LaPAS does not reflect the efforts and achievements associated with the activities forming the basis of your proposal. Provide clear and specific evidence of the establishment of an expected level of performance at the beginning of the fiscal year or before the activity was undertaken, which expectation could then be compared to actual achievements at year's end. Citation of specific source documents for this data is *required*.

Format 2.

| Program (or agency): | | | | | | |
|-------------------------|----------|--------|----------|--------|----------|--------|
| Performance Expectation | FY | | FY | | FY | |
| | Standard | Actual | Standard | Actual | Standard | Actual |
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In this space describe the circumstances and process related to development of the performance expectations presented in Format 2, including reference to specific source documentation.

REWARD PROPOSAL BASED ON EXCEPTIONAL PERFORMANCE

- C. Expenditures.** For the subject year and the preceding year, provide the following expenditure data for the program(s) (or equivalent) in which the subject activity occurred, as well as that for the entire agency. *Provide this data using the format below, attaching addenda as necessary.*

| | | Preceding Year | Subject Year |
|------------------|--------------------------------------|---------------------|---------------------|
| Program: | Management & Finance | FY 2001-2002 | FY 2002-2003 |
| | End-of-year actual expenditures | 29,459,403 | 36,188,595 |
| | End-of-year actual T.O. | 439 | 454 |
| Activity: | Bureau of Protective Services | FY 2001-2002 | FY 2002-2003 |
| | End-of-year actual Expenditures | 1,246,766 | 1,385,182 |
| | End-of-year actual T.O. | 28 | 28 |
| Agency: | Office of the Secretary | FY 2001-2002 | FY 2002-2003 |
| | End-of-year actual Expenditures | 38,087,084 | 46,688,543 |
| | End-of-year actual T.O. | 447 | 466 |

PART TWO: ACTIONS OF EMPLOYEES

Complete this Part if the achievements evidenced in your proposal are the result of the efforts of specific employees. Present this information in narrative fashion. You must include the employee names, job titles, and general contribution to the effort.

REWARD PROPOSAL BASED ON EXCEPTIONAL PERFORMANCE

Over the past three years, the APS caseload has grown in size by 24.6% (from 1007 in FY 01 to 1255 in FY 03). The caseload has also become more complex, as evidenced by a 158% increase in cases requiring legal intervention (from 102 in FY 01 to 264 in FY 03). Despite this increasingly demanding workload, the APS staff not only met, but significantly exceeded, both program standards and performance indicator targets. This was possible due first to the exceptional efforts of the APS program management staff in anticipating the changing nature of the caseload and recognizing that new methods would be needed to respond to the change. The program staff developed and implemented a new system and new policies and procedures to improve the investigation and documentation process. Those staff involved were: Charles Poimboeuf, Intake and MIS Manager, who wrote the new database application; Ellen Estevens, APS Program Manager, who developed the new quality assurance system and provided direction and leadership to the supervisory staff in implementing the new system of case monitoring. Patti Kelly and Nicolo Festa, APS Program Coordinators, who implemented the new system at the field level. Sarah Simms, Quality Assurance Coordinator who implemented the quality assurance system.

Ultimately, not just maintaining but improving performance during a time when the workload was becoming more demanding was a result of the actions of the APS Specialists themselves. They are: Dawn Bentley, Deneen Montgomery-Smith, Suzanne Stevenson-Gish, Julie Callaway, Timolin Ferdinand, William Smith, Deborah Corbin, Adrienne Octave, Allen Franks, Devora Orphe, Debbie Rickman, Doanie Doucet, John Crawford, Queecanne Davis, Bessie Larry, Beverly Player, and Karen Cottingham. These staff willingly adapted to the changes and put forth the extra effort enable us to improve performance despite the increasing workload.

REWARD PROPOSAL BASED ON EXCEPTIONAL PERFORMANCE

PART THREE: EXPLANATION OF PROPOSED REWARD AND ITS USE

I. Aggregate amount of reward requested:

\$32840.09

II. Explain how the proposed reward funding would be used, whether for non-recurring expenditures or supplemental compensation, or both:

A. Non-recurring expenditures

The proposed reward would be used for the acquisition of laptop computers for use by the 17 APS Specialists. As noted in the proposal, the achievement of these results is in part based on the ability to quickly and accurately document the casework performed. The APS Specialists currently use desktop computers that are several years past being "state-of-the art". The use of laptops would enable them to document in the field, for example immediately following an interview. This would make the documentation more accurate and facilitate getting the information into the database more quickly. This would help us to continue to maintain performance as the workload increases in both number and complexity (caseloads are up 20% so far in FY 2003-04). We consider this a non-recurring expenditure as we have not purchased new computers in many years and anticipate that the new laptops would serve our needs for several years to come. The amount requested represent 17 Dell D600 models at the current state contract price of \$1931.77.

B. Supplemental Compensation

Not Applicable.

Attachment A

Part One: A. (cont'd).

However, the Regional Administrator positions were eliminated in 2000 in response to budget cuts. Since that time, the state office management staff have doubled as first-line supervisors of the APS Specialists.

Current APS policy and procedure sets several timelines for casework. Initial case response must occur by a deadline based on the priority level assigned to the case. The investigation/assessment phase of the case must be completed within thirty (30) days of receipt of the report, unless a supervisor approves an extension. The remainder of the casework, primarily the service planning or case management phase must be completed within 120 days of receipt of the report, again unless a supervisory extension is granted. The procedure was revised in 2001. The previous procedure allowed sixty (60) days for the completion of the case, with no distinction made between the investigation phase and the rest of the casework.

The APS program's performance indicators are set forth in Goal 1, Objective 4 of the DHH Strategic Plan. They are as follows:

- General Performance Indicator – Number of cases assigned to investigators
- Key Performance Indicators- Percentage of investigations completed within established timeframes; Average number of days to complete investigations; and Number of clients served
- Secondary Performance Indicator – Number of investigations completed

When the LaPAS system was begun, the targets for key and secondary indicators were set based on the first year's experience and on the existing policy of sixty (60) days for case completion. The targets have subsequently been adjusted, as discussed further below. For Fiscal Year 2000-01 some of the targets were adjusted slightly downward to reflect the loss of two positions in that year's layoff. The adjusted targets for Fiscal Year 2000-01 were as follows:

- Number of investigations completed – 800
- Percentage of investigations completed within established timeframes – 50%
- Average number of days to complete investigations – 50
- Number of clients served – 875

Despite the loss of staff, the agency's actual performance greatly exceeded the targets, as noted in the table in Format 1. The number of cases assigned, and number of clients served are basically beyond the agency's control, as any report called in must be accepted if it meets the eligibility criteria established in the law and policy. However, the other indicators are a function of how efficient the agency's staff are in responding to reports and in completing and documenting the casework. Documentation is particularly important in that until the work is documented in the agency database, it cannot be captured for LaPAS reporting and tracking.

For Fiscal Year 2001-02 the indicator "percentage of investigations completed within established timeframes" was adjusted to 60% to reflect the prior year's actual performance. The other indicators remained the same. Again, the agency exceeded all targets, particularly the number of investigations completed (by 32%) and the average number of days to complete the investigation (by 57%). The table in Format 1 provides the actual data.

Given the large variances, the targets for Fiscal Year 2002-03 were again adjusted to more closely reflect the prior year's actual performance. During the course of the year APS had the two positions previously cut restored and two additional field staff added. This was in response to a workload request based on the agency's 38% increase in cases assigned between 1999 and 2002, including an increase in cases involving recipients of Medicaid waiver services. It should also be noted that despite the addition of these staff, the agency experienced considerable turnover during the period and was operated for much of the year with less than a full complement of APS specialists in the field. For FY 2002-03 the new targets were:

- Number of investigations completed – 1000
- Percentage of investigations completed within established timeframes – 75%
- Average number of days to complete investigations – 22
- Number of clients served – 950

Once again, the agency exceeded these revised targets for all of the indicators. The actual performance was:

- Number of investigations completed – 1103
- Percentage of investigations completed within established timeframes – 81%
- Average number of days to complete investigations – 19.6%
- Number of clients served – 1076

At first glance, it may appear that APS' performance is merely a reflection of targets that were poor estimates of performance. However, the actual performance indicator data shows a continuous improvement, particularly in the area of how quickly cases are investigated and documented. APS has reduced the time taken to complete investigations from an average of 30 days in FY 2000-01 to 20 days in the subject fiscal year. The percentage of investigations completed within policy timelines has increased from 61% to 81% over the same period. It should be noted that for Fiscal Year 2002-03 performance still improved over the previous year, even after the targets had been adjusted. We believe that the performance is a direct result of steps initiated by the agency. It should also be noted that this improvement has come when the caseload has not only increased in size, but in complexity. One measure of complexity, the number of cases requiring legal referrals or legal action to protect the victims, has risen from 102 to 264 over the past three years. We believe the APS program staff went beyond merely meeting program standards in anticipating the need for change and designing and implementing new procedure to improve performance. The APS field staff went beyond basic job requirements in carrying out the new procedures in such a way as to significantly improve performance, not just to meet minimum program standards.

In response to the layoffs in 2000 and the elimination of the Regional Administrators, the APS program was faced with two dilemmas, how to effectively supervise the field staff now that the Regional Administrators were gone and how to cope with the loss of staff. To address these issues a number of steps were undertaken, not all of which are directly related to this proposal. However, the major steps, which we believe do relate directly to the continuing improvement in the performance indicators, were:

- The development and implementation of a new database
- The development and implementation of a new documentation system

- The development and implementation of new case consultation and monitoring procedures
- The development and implementation of an improved quality assurance system

The first two steps had a synergistic affect resulting in a more efficient method of data recording and case documentation. A new database was being developed to convert from an older DOS-based system to a Windows-based system. In developing the system, APS managers decided to expand the function of the database from recording basic information about clients and cases for statistical purposes to serving as the complete record of the case. The data system was re-designed in such a way as to allow APS specialists to record narrative information about the investigation or assessment, the service plan, the case outcome and other information directly into the database. Documentation procedures were changed to allow staff to document cases in the system as they worked the case. Previously documentation was done by hand and a final report typed at the conclusion of the case. With ongoing documentation in the system and electronic transfer of information between the field staff and state office, the system allows supervisors housed in Baton Rouge to have up to date information about the cases without waiting to receive hard copy reports. The documentation is done directly by the APS specialists, as they have no clerical staff available in the regions.

To accompany this new system and cope with the loss of the regional supervisors, procedures were initiated requiring systematic contact between APS specialists and supervisors. Among these procedures were mandatory consultation prior to beginning certain types of cases and regularly scheduled reviews of each workers entire caseload. Finally, the quality assurance program was overhauled. Previously, state office staff had reviewed completed cases after the cases had been signed off on by the Regional Administrators. With the Regional Administrators gone and supervision shifted to state office, this was no longer possible. A new quality assurance instrument was developed and a staff person was assigned to conduct preliminary reviews using this instrument, with a sample of cases receiving a more detailed review.

Together these steps, along with increased emphasis on productivity in staff training, have contributed greatly to the agency's ongoing improvement in its performance measures. Despite a continuing upward trend in the number of case assigned, the APS program has completed and closed out more cases than anticipated, in the process eliminating a backlog of old cases which had been worked but not completely documented. With more systematic supervisor involvement and more up to date documentation of casework, APS specialists have become more efficient in conducting investigations. This has resulted in continued improvement in the percentage of investigations completed within the thirty (30) day standard and in the average number of days it takes to complete an investigation.